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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 002527

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,  
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD  
USAID/ANE/MEA  
LONDON FOR GOLDRICH  
PARIS FOR O'FRIEL  
USCINCENT/CCPA, USCENCOM REAR MACDILL AFB FL  
NICOSIA FOR ILMG  
STATE PASS TO AID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR JO](#)

SUBJECT: JORDAN: MEDIA REACTION ON THE OPERATIONS IN  
NETANYA AND GAZA, PM'S VISIT TO PNA, AND VP CHENEY'S  
INTERVIEW, IRAQ

#### SUMMARY

NEWS REPORTS IN JORDAN'S DAILIES ON MAY 20 DEALT WITH  
THREE MAIN STORIES: THE BOMBINGS IN ISRAEL, WHICH WERE  
DESCRIBED AS "COMMANDO OPERATIONS," PRIME MINISTER ABUL  
RAGHEB'S VISIT TO RAMALLAH IN WHICH HE HIGHLIGHTED  
JORDAN'S SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN REFORMS AND FOR THE  
CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE, AND VP CHENEY'S  
INTERVIEW WITH FOX NEWS IN WHICH HE WARNED OF "NEW  
ATTACKS AGAINST THE U.S." AND ASSERTED THAT THE RETURN  
OF THE INSPECTORS DOES NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM WITH IRAQ.

EDITORIAL COMMENTARIES EXPRESSED DIVERSE OPINIONS ON  
THE ISSUE OF PALESTINIAN REFORMS, BUT ALL AGREED THAT  
THE AMERICAN ISRAELI CALLS FOR REFORMS ARE MADE IN BAD  
FAITH, AND THAT THEY ARE AN ATTEMPT TO COMPLETE THE  
ISRAELI MILITARY OPERATION'S AIM TO ELIMINATE THE  
PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY. OTHER COMMENTATORS WARNED THAT  
DESPITE IRAQ'S ACCEPTANCE OF UN DEMANDS, U.S.  
PREPARATIONS FOR AN "AGGRESSION" AGAINST IT WILL  
CONTINUE.

#### NEWS REPORTS

JORDANIAN DAILIES ON ALL LED WITH REPORTS ON THE  
BOMBINGS IN NETANYA AND GAZA. THE HEADLINES DESCRIBED  
THE BOMBINGS AS "OPERATIONS" OR "COMMANDO OPERATIONS,"  
WHILE INDEPENDENT, MASS-APPEAL ARABIC DAILY AL-ARAB AL-  
YAWM SAID: "HAMAS STRIKES AGAIN IN NETANYA."

DAILIES ALSO GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO PRIME MINISTER  
ALI ABUL RAGHEB'S VISIT TO RAMALLAH, WITH HEADLINES  
HIGHLIGHTING JORDAN'S SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN  
REFORMS AND THE QUEST TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT  
STATE.

JORDANIAN DAILIES ALSO REPORTED ON THEIR FRONT PAGES VP  
CHENEY'S INTERVIEW WITH FOX NEWS, HIGHLIGHTING TWO  
ELEMENTS: HIS ASSERTION THAT THE RETURN OF THE WEAPONS  
INSPECTORS DOES NOT ELIMINATE THE PROBLEM WITH IRAQ,  
AND HIS WARNING OF MORE "ATTACKS AGAINST THE U.S."

#### EDITORIAL COMMENTARIES

-- THE BATTLE OF PALESTINIAN REFORMS  
IMPORTANT DAILY COLUMNIST BASSEM SAKEJHA WROTE IN  
CENTER-LEFT, INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-DUSTOUR ON MAY  
20: "CORRUPTION IN THE PNA IS NOT A SECRET, AND WHEN  
THE PALESTINIANS ELECTED THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY, THEY DID NOT DO SO IN PERPETUITY. BUT  
QUESTIONS OF REFORM ARE NOW RAISED NOT FROM WITHIN, BUT  
BY THE ENEMY AND HIS ALLY, AS IF THE BATTLE WERE NOT  
ABOUT THE CHURCH OF NATIVITY AND JENIN, BUT ABOUT THE  
DATE OF ELECTIONS AND THE SIZE OF THE CABINET. THE  
PROBLEM IS THAT THE PALESTINIAN PRESIDENCY CONSIDERS  
THE TIMING OF THE ELECTIONS TO BE A CARD TO PRESSURE  
THE ISRAELIS AND AMERICANS, NOT A PROCESS OF REAL  
REFORM. WE ALL KNOW THAT THE AMERICAN TALK ABOUT  
REFORM IS IN BAD FAITH, BUT THIS DOES NOT JUSTIFY  
DELAYING THIS STEP, WHICH WOULD BE THE FIRST IN  
BUILDING A DEMOCRATIC STATE. TEL AVIV AND WASHINGTON  
WANT THEM AS A WAY OF BRINGING IN A PALESTINIAN  
LEADERSHIP THAT WOULD BE LAX REGARDING PALESTINIAN  
NATIONAL ISSUES, BUT EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT THEY  
WILL NOT SUCCEED BECAUSE THE PALESTINIAN STREET ALWAYS  
HAS THE MEANS TO CORRECT POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS."

-- THEY CALL FOR LIBERATING ANDALUSIA  
TAHER AL-ADWAN, CHIEF EDITOR OF INDEPENDENT, MASS-  
APPEAL ARABIC DAILY AL-ARAB AL-YAWM WROTE ON MAY 20:

"MANY THINGS HAVE CHANGED SINCE SHARON UNLEASHED HIS TROOPS TO REOCCUPY THE LIBERATED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES AND REACHED THE DOORS OF THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, WITH UNPRECEDENTED AMERICAN SUPPORT. NOW THE TALK IS ABOUT THE PREROGATIVES OF THE PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT, AND HIS PALESTINIAN CRITICS JUSTIFY THEMSELVES BY CLAIMING THAT THEY MAKE CALLS FOR REFORM. BUT EVERYONE REMEMBERS THAT THE ORIGIN OF THESE CALLS WERE PRESIDENT BUSH AND GENERAL SHARON, AND THEIR CALL FOR 'REFORM' IS TO COMPLETE THE PRESSURE THAT THE MILITARY OPERATION STARTED. ARAFAT NOW RESISTS ATTEMPTS TO ELIMINATE HIM AND THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY. HIS CRITICS, THEREFORE, ARE LIKE THOSE WHO TOLL THE BELLS CALLING FOR PRAYER WHILE THE ENEMY TROOPS SCALE THE WALLS OF THEIR CITY. WE FIND OURSELVES LOOKING AT A CARICATURE BEST DESCRIBED BY PALESTINIAN POET MAHMOUD DARWISH IN A FAMOUS POEM, IN WHICH HE SAID: 'THEY CALL FOR LIBERATING ANDALUSIA WHEN ALEPPO IS UNDER SIEGE.'"

-- LOOKING FOR PRETEXTS

"FORMER UNDER-SECRETARY OF CULTURE MOHAMMAD NAJI AMAYREH WROTE IN SEMI-OFFICIAL INFLUENTIAL ARABIC DAILY AL-RAI ON MAY 20: "AMERICAN THREATS OF A MILITARY STRIKE AGAINST IRAQ HAVE NOT CEASED ALTHOUGH IRAQ HAS ACCEPTED THE NEW SANCTIONS REGIME AND IT DID NOT OPPOSE THE RETURN OF THE INSPECTORS, WHILE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO PREVENT THEM FROM BECOMING SPIES FOR THE U.S. THE U.S. AND ITS ALLY BRITAIN ARE NOW LOOKING FOR PRETEXTS FOR THIS AGGRESSION, AND THEY WILL PROBABLY FIND SOME, BECAUSE PREPARATIONS FOR THE AGGRESSION ONLY WAIT FOR A MORE APPROPRIATE MOMENT TO LAUNCH IT. THIS HESITATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY HAVE RULED OUT MILITARY ACTION. HOWEVER, AMERICA WILL FAIL TO ACHIEVE ITS AIMS FROM THIS STRIKE, WHICH WILL ONLY WEAKEN U.S. SUPPORTERS IN THE ARAB WORLD AND STRENGTHEN THOSE WHO CALL FOR SEARCHING FOR ALTERNATIVE FRIENDS." GNEHM